

Message Text

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ACTION EB-08

INFO OCT-01 EA-10 ISO-00 CAB-02 CIAE-00 COME-00
DODE-00 DOTE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 FAA-00 L-03 PA-01
ICA-11 SS-15 NSC-05 /066 W
-----037976 130606Z /10

R 130508Z JUN 78
FM AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5722
INFO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA
AMEMBASSY SUVA
AMEMBASSY PORT MORESBY

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE WELLINGTON 03063

E.O. 11652:N/A
TAGS: EAIR, ETRD, WS, NZ
SUBJECT: WESTERN SAMOAN CRITICISM OF NON-STOP TRANS
PACIFIC AIRLINE FLIGHTS.

BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED

1. IN A RECENT SPEECH BEFORE THE PACIFIC ISLAND
TOURISM DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL (PITDC) IN TAHITI LAST MONTH,
WESTERN SAMOAN MINISTER OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS,
ASI EKENI EXPRESSED HIS GOVERNMENT'S UNHAPPINESS WITH
THE DEVELOPMENT OF NON-STOP 747-SP SERVICES BETWEEN
NEW ZEALAND, AUSTRALIA AND THE NORTH AMERICAN MAINLAND.
SUCH SERVICES WOULD IN THE MINISTER'S VIEW, "STARVE THE
INTERMEDIATE ISLANDS OF VISITORS". IT WAS FOR
THIS REASON THE GOVERNMENT OF WESTERN SAMOA SUPPORTED
PRESENT U.S. CIVIL AERONAUTICS BOARD POLICIES FOR
INCREASED OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHARTER OPERATORS.
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2. EMBASSY COMMENT: IT HAS BEEN CLEAR FOR SOME TIME
THAT THE INCREASED DEVELOPMENT OF 747-SP SERVICES WOULD
WORK TO THE DISADVANTAGE OF THE SMALLER PACIFIC ISLANDS
WHO ARE PRIME BENEFICIARIES OF THE TRADITIONAL REFUELING
STOPS. THIS IS, TO OUR KNOWLEDGE, HOWEVER, THE FIRST
TIME THAT THIS UNEASE HAS BEEN PUBLICALLY EXPRESSED.

IT IS FOR THIS REASON ALSO THAT THE GOVERNMENT OF WESTERN SAMOA (GOWS) HAS BEEN A STRONG SUPPORTER OF CONTINENTAL'S MULTI-STOP ROUTE THROUGH THE PACIFIC AND WHY THE GOWS HAS LOBBIED WITH THE NEW ZEALANDERS (AND WE ASSUME THE AUSTRALIANS) ON CONTINENTAL'S BEHALF. THE REFERENCE TO CHARTERS REFLECTS NOT ONLY A GOWS GENERAL DESIRE FOR FACILITATING ANY TRANSPORTATION MODE THAT WOULD BRING MORE TOURISTS TO THE AREA, BUT ALSO WE SUSPECT REFLECTS THE ACTIVE POLITICKING OF WORLD AIRWAYS PRESIDENT DALY WHO IS A HIGHLY REGARDED PHILANTHROPIC FIGURE IN WESTERN SAMOA. END LIMITED OFFICIAL USE. HEALY

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLICIES, AIRLINES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 13 jun 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978WELLIN03063
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780246-0355
Format: TEL
From: WELLINGTON
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780663/aaaaccgn.tel
Line Count: 73
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 50b1bc89-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EB
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 05 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2365826
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: WESTERN SAMOAN CRITICISM OF NON-STOP TRANS PACIFIC AIRLINE FLIGHTS. BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED
TAGS: EAIR, ETRD, WS, NZ, US, AS, (EKENI, ASI)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/50b1bc89-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014